

NB: This is not an accurate word-for-word transcript

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**Kate:** Hello and welcome to this week's 6 Minute English. Joining me again today is Rebecca. Hi Rebecca. In today's programme we're talking about books and reading. Are you a keen reader Rebecca?

**Rebecca:** Answers...

**Kate:** We often hold an emotional attachment to books, keeping them for years, lending them to friends or giving them as presents. But that all may be about to change....as in the last few years some major companies have made available millions of books online which can also be downloaded on to **electronic readers**. Can you explain what electronic readers are?

**Rebecca:** Certainly, an **electronic reader is** a small hand held computer capable of storing hundreds of books in electronic form and displaying the pages as clearly as in a real book. An electronic book or eBook!

**Kate:** I'm sorry but I just don't like the sound of that. I love books and the way they feel. I like going into bookshops and buying a whole collection of brand new books. What do you think – would you prefer to start reading your books on screen?

**Rebecca:** Well – I can see how it would be handy and it would be great to stop having to carry those huge volumes around with me, not to mention freeing up some space in my home. But having said that, I already spend too much time looking at a computer screen as it is, so perhaps just for the sake of my eyes it wouldn't be such a good thing.

**Kate:** And now to my question for this week. An old book which looks as though it has been read by many people can sometimes be referred to in one of the following ways:

- a) cat-tailed
- b) dog-eared
- c) mouse-nosed

**Rebecca:** answers

**Kate:** Thanks – we'll find out the correct answer at the end of the programme. We're going to hear from two people to hear what they think of the eBooks. Before we listen, could you explain what the word **luddite** means?

**Rebecca:** A **luddite** is someone who is averse or unwilling to adapt to changes in technology. Someone who refuses to learn how to use a computer or mobile phone, for example.

**Kate:** And **concept adjustment**?

**Rebecca:** This expression means to change the way we think about something, especially if we feel very strongly that something should be a certain way.

**Kate:** Thanks – so let's listen to the first extract. How does the speaker, John Sutherland feel about e-readers?

Extract 1

Everyone has got a **luddite** inside and everyone thinks 'I don't need mechanics...I can read, I can handle libraries, I'm in control of the information sources I have. The point is that we all need a big **concept adjustment** – it's going to happen in 2 or 3 years time'.

**Rebecca:** He said everyone has a **luddite** inside that doesn't want anything to change but that we had to accept it was going to happen in as little as 2 or 3 years! I suppose he's likely to be right. At the moment most people are likely to say they don't like the idea of reading a book on a computer, but then we all said the same about newspapers and music didn't we ...?

**Kate:** Yes, but the idea still makes me feel quite sad to think of all those wonderful old books being replaced by a modern computer. Are we really going to start speaking about the books we read today as **antiquarian**? This is a word which means special and old.

**Rebecca:** Well, some people are even beginning to speak of books as being **sacred**. This means to be considered holy and deserving of very special respect because of a connection with God. What does the 2<sup>nd</sup> speaker, Peter Florence think of this...?

#### Extract 2

I don't think the book is **sacred**. I think the story's **sacred** the writing's **sacred** and the means in which you get it can be any you like. What will happen as electronic media presents stories more available, is that the old **antiquarian** stuff will become more valuable.

**Rebecca:** Interesting – he doesn't think the book itself is **sacred** or special. He thinks that the story itself is the important thing. He thinks that as more and more of us begin to use the electronic media, that the **antiquarian** or old fashioned books will become more valuable.

**Kate:** Valuable! That's good to hear – at least some of our old books will have some use. But yes, he does have a point. What is it we actually value? Is it the story and narrative or the book itself? It brings up some interesting issues of what it is we really like about books.  
I still can't imagine everyone reading books on computers though..... do you think we'll be sitting here in 3 or 4 years time finding it completely normal?

**Rebecca:** answers

**Kate:** So now to the question I asked you earlier. Which expression describes an old, well read book?

**Rebecca:** answers

**Kate:** The expression is 'dog-eared'.

**Rebecca:** This means when the pages are all bent and many people have read it.

**Kate:** Thanks – and now let's quickly run over the rest of the vocabulary we heard in today's programme:

**Rebecca:** We had **electronic readers, eBook, luddite, concept adjustment, sacred** and **antiquarian**. And don't forget **dog-eared** of course.

**Kate:** Thanks Rebecca – that's all we've got time for today. Until next time (while you're still able to get your hands on a real book).... happy reading!